

SALISBURY, MD.
TIMES

From A. W. Dulles To J. A. McCone

It would have been tactless to mention it before and in the future it may not be police; but super-sleuthing doesn't seem to come off for the United States.

The transfer of responsibility for Central Intelligence Agency from Allen W. Dulles to John A. McCone is as good a time to admit this as any time likely to come along. We never thought Mr. Dulles fitted the picture, and we think Mr. McCone, a businessman par excellence who has been working for the federal government in several key spots, notably No. 1 on the Atomic Energy Commission, will have trouble fitting the picture too.

This is not because of any shortcomings either real or imaginary in the two men. It is because of a very real shortcoming in the American people, who are not temperamentally suited for the kind of thing CIA is designed to do.

INTRIGUE, counterespionage, duplicity, knife being inserted skillfully between ribs in dark alleys, great plans afoot with no one the wiser and games that justify the candle are contrary to the spirit of the United States. These are things that go with European intrigue and the devious ways of inscrutable Orientals.

American shortcomings came to attention in a disturbing way when the U-2 incident reached the headlines. Here was the slickest

super-sleuthing of the jet-electronics era, but all Americans thought of when the day of reckoning came was the failure of the last U-2 mission.

Even the White House reacted improperly, as was pointed out by every knowledgeable critic of President Eisenhower's unwarranted assumption of responsibility. No head of state ever admits he knows anything about a spying project. He pretends he never heard about it before.

Yet, only a year later, despite the Eisenhower assumption of guilt and its explosive consequences, President Kennedy assumed full personal responsibility for the failure of a CIA project in Cuba. Even if it had been a success instead of a fiasco, he should have denied any knowledge of it; that's the classical formula for spying without responsibility.

THERE'S A CODE for this sort of thing, and Americans are not temperamentally suited to live under the code; that's the truth of it.

Everybody wants Mr. McCone to be a great success, just as everybody wanted Mr. Dulles to be a great success.

But the job is being tackled under a heavy handicap. Americans are such honorable, up-right, decent, chin-up, eyes-on-the-horizon people that they don't really believe in CIA in the first place.